

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the first paragraph on page 1 with the following amended paragraph:

This application is a Continuation-In-Part of U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/957,602 filed on September 20, 2001, still pending.

Please replace the paragraph bridging pages 20 and 21 with the following amended paragraph:

The polyethylene membrane was punched with a customary tool in order to form a regular pattern of parallel long holes. The holes had a width of 11 mm and were spaced 0.3 mm apart in a direction perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the hole. Along each of the four edges of the ~~membran~~ membrane a region of 4 mm width was left unperforated, thereby defining an inner region. The pattern of long holes was arranged so that it covered the inner region, wherein the longitudinal axes of the long holes were extending in parallel to the sides of the rectangular membrane. Thereby the open area was 90 % - 91 %.

Please replace the Abstract on page 27 with the following amended Abstract:

~~The invention concerns a~~ A battery separator comprising at least one fibrous layer and at least one support layer, wherein ~~said~~ the support layer is formed of an acid-resistant material and comprises a plurality of macroscopic openings.

Amendment to the Drawings:

The attached sheet of drawings includes changes to Figure 1. This sheet, which includes only Figure 1, replaces the original sheet including only Figure 1. In Figure 1, the term "Figure" has been spelled correctly.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet